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## Envoy tells of 'hope' for hostages' release

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — A special envoy sent by the archbishop of Canterbury to negotiate the release of American hostages held by Shi'ite Moslem extremists said last night he saw a "real opportunity for a breakthrough."

"I see some hope," said the envoy, Terry Waite, who successfully negotiated the release of Britons held in Iran and Libya.

"The fact that I'm here does indicate there's a possibility of freeing the hostages," said Waite, who was ringed by Moslem militiamen and airport security officials upon his arrival.

Mr. Waite, a special adviser to Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie, the spiritual head of the Church of England, said after arriving from London that he was "here on humanitarian grounds because I want to see a resolution to this problem..."

Lebanese security guards and militiamen at the airport whisked the burly envoy past scrambling reporters and television crews.

He was taken through the terminal, ringed by militiamen linking arms, without immigration formalities. Yelling guards bundled him into a sedan. The car sped away with a rifle-toting militiaman hanging out the window and Mr. Waite jammed in the back seat between militiamen.

His escorts belonged to an airport "security force" composed of militiamen from the Shi'ite militia Amal and the Progressive Socialist Party of the mystic Islamic Druze sect.

Before leaving London, the 46-year-old emissary called his mission the most

dangerous he has undertaken because his earlier efforts involved "an identifiable person or group or government."

Archbishop Runcie on Tuesday said Mr. Waite was "a joint envoy" of his church and Pope John Paul II, "and the pope is corresponding with us." However, Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro said yesterday that although the Holy See hoped Mr. Waite would succeed in his mission, he could not be considered a papal envoy.

Mr. Waite embarked on his latest mission after making contact with an unidentified intermediary in Beirut about the Americans, who have been missing five to 10 months, and after receiving a confidential letter from four of the Americans believed held by Islamic Jihad, or Islamic Holy War.

Islamic Jihad, a fundamentalist Shi'ite group loyal to Iran's revolutionary patriarch, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, has claimed responsibility for abducting six Americans. It said Oct. 4 that it had killed one of the six, diplomat William Buckley.

It released blurred photographs of a body said to be Mr. Buckley's, but U.S. officials say there is no proof Mr. Buckley is dead. There has been no recent mention of another hostage, American University librarian Peter Kilburn.

The letter, delivered Friday to The Associated Press bureau in Beirut, was signed by the Rev. Lawrence Jenco, a Roman Catholic priest; Terry Anderson, chief Middle East correspondent for the Associated Press; and two officials of Beirut's American University, hospital director David Jacobsen and agriculture dean Thomas Sutherland.